

NJ Fish and Wildlife Updates

For Licensing Agents and Fish & Wildlife Constituents

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May 2000

Welcome

Welcome to the first issue of *Fish and Wildlife Updates*, a monthly newsletter from the Division geared toward keeping you, the sporting public, informed of the issues facing wildlife in New Jersey today.

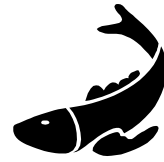


Unfortunately, New Jersey's sportsmen and women are currently overwhelmed with misinformation regarding the Division and key issues surrounding fish and wildlife in our state. As a result, we are taking this opportunity to dismiss a lot of the misunderstanding that exists and offer sportsmen and women a dependable publication they can turn to for answers. This newsletter is designed to offer a simple, direct and interactive exchange of ideas, as well as insights regarding the issues and concerns you care about most.

Having one of the most progressive fish and wildlife management programs in the nation, included in this issue are some of the many accomplishments the Division has provided for the residents of the Garden State.

We hope you find NJ Fish & Wildlife Updates a useful and reliable resource.

Did You Know?



- The Fish and Game Council, created by law in 1945, is responsible for adopting a Fish and Game Code for the conservation and protection of New Jersey's fish and wildlife, as well as overseeing the "Hunters' and Anglers' Fund" which supports these efforts. The hunting and fishing community, New Jersey's leading conservationists, is given a tremendous opportunity to provide input into the Council's decisions regarding fish and wildlife conservation by nominating six members to serve on this eleven member council.
- In addition to their input on the Fish and Game Council, the sportsmen and women of New Jersey contribute to the conservation and protection of the state's fish and wildlife resources through license and permit purchases. These individuals also contribute through a special federal excise tax placed on the hunting and fishing equipment they purchase.
- New Jersey residents and non-residents spend over \$1.9 billion on wildlife-related recreation in the state. This means an impact of \$3.8 billion on the state's economy!
- More money is spent annually in New Jersey for hunting, fishing and watchable wildlife recreation than the total box office receipts of *Titanic* nationally - the top grossing film in U.S. history.
- The total economic activity generated by hunting activities in New Jersey annually equals the total toll collections of the New Jersey Turnpike Authority.
- The Division of Fish and Wildlife is unique in state government in that its operation is dependent on dedicated funds. With the exception of marine fish

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WHAT DOES THE DIVISION DO?

- The Division manages a deer herd of 150,000 throughout the state's 4,734 square miles of deer range. Each year more than 95,000 deer hunters harvest approximately 60,000 deer during 121 days afield. The Division also implemented a Community-Based Deer Management Program to assist local authorities in dealing with deer populations that have exceeded the cultural and/or physical capacity to sustain them. In addition, the Division annually teams up with local chapters of Hunters Helping the Hungry in an effort to have surplus harvested venison delivered to area food banks servicing needy families in the Garden State.
- The Division provides technical assistance to the agricultural community and the general public in efforts to control wildlife-related damage to crops and property. Last year, the Division responded to more than 3,500 wildlife nuisance and damage complaints from homeowners/landowners involving such species as deer, bear, beaver and coyote. Deer repellent and fencing alone, cost approximately \$50,000.
- Division Conservation Officers are among the agency's most visible representatives, contacting more than 50,000 hunters and anglers annually. In the field they educate and redirect the actions of wildlife users to ensure compliance with wildlife regulations. The Division prosecutes more than 4,000 wildlife violators each year.
- The Division maintains and operates the Pequest Trout Hatchery and Natural Resource Education Center. This facility produces more than 750,000 trout annually for stocking in over 200 bodies of water. The center is visited by over 70,000 people annually including over 200 school and civic groups. The Division also conducts a fishing education program at the facility that introduces more than 2,000 people annually to the sport of fishing.
- The Division maintains and operates the Charles O. Hayford Hatchery. This facility annually produces more than 1,050,000 cold, cool and warmwater fish. Thirteen species including sunfish, catfish, bass, northern pike, muskellunge and walleye are stocked in over 100 different lakes, ponds and rivers throughout the state. The Division also conducts the Children's Fishing Derby Program by providing at no charge, sunfish (200 per derby) for more than 50 Children's Fishing Derbies in urban areas.
- The reintroduction of turkeys back in 1976 has benefited the Garden State with a current population of more than 18,000 birds in 20 counties, enabling the Division to establish a spring and fall hunting season for turkey.
- The Division coordinates the State-mandated New Jersey Hunter Education Program. In 1998, the Hunter Education Office handled almost 15,000 applications and certified more than 12,000 persons who successfully completed one of our courses in bow and arrow, shotgun, rifle/muzzleloader, trapper training and remedial sportsman education. In addition, the Division conducts the "Take a Kid Hunting" Program which is a series of one-day field opportunities offered to introduce youngsters to the tradition of hunting.
- The Division relies on the support of more than 1,800 volunteers who assist biologists in the areas of research, management, law enforcement, and hunter education. It represents the largest natural resource management volunteer group in New Jersey. Through their support, the Division has been able to provide many additional services to our constituents.
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- One of the Division's greatest assets is the land base upon which New Jersey's wildlife depends. Currently, about 15,000 acres per year are added to the Wildlife Management Area System through Green Acres funding. The Division of Fish and Wildlife is responsible for developing public access and habitat improvement efforts on these new acquisitions. Currently, the Division manages more than 260,000 acres on 111 Wildlife Management Areas -- approximately 43 percent of New Jersey's state-owned open space.



HAVE A QUESTION? ASK A BIOLOGIST...

If there is a specific fisheries or wildlife question/issue you'd like to see addressed, write to the: New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife, c/o Fish & Wildlife Updates Editor, P.O. Box 400, Trenton, NJ 08625-0400. Be sure to include your name and address so that a reply can be made. Of the questions received, several will be highlighted each month.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

GAME CODE HEARING

TUESDAY, JUNE 6, 2000

NATIONAL GUARD ARMORY

151 EGGRETS CROSSING RD.

LAWRENCEVILLE, NJ

MTNG TIME: 6:00 P.M.-11:00P.M.

FISH CODE PUBLIC MEETING

TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2000

ASSUNPINK CONSERVATION CENTER

386 CLARKSBURG /ROBBINSVILLE RD.

ROBBINSVILLE, NJ

7:00P.M.

DEER APPLICATION PERIOD

JUNE 1 THROUGH SEPT. 10

HUNTING DIGEST

AVAILABLE MID AUGUST



Questions & Answers

In this section of the newsletter we will respond to your requests for information about wildlife and the Division. We will also utilize this space to answer questions most often asked of Division personnel.

Q. What is the difference between resident and migrant Canada geese in New Jersey?

A. New Jersey is home to two distinct populations of Canada geese: migrants and residents. These two populations breed in different areas of the continent and are actually different subspecies or "races." Migrant geese breed in the tundra of northern Quebec and migrate south to wintering areas in the United States, including New Jersey. Resident geese generally breed in southern Canada and throughout states along the Atlantic Flyway (East Coast), generally making no, or relatively short migrations in winter. Both migrant and resident geese look physically similar and readily mix in the fall and winter. All available banding and other information indicate that migrant geese do not "switch" to become residents. Migrant geese hatched on the tundra continue to migrate and return there to breed. Resident geese stay in mid-latitude areas to breed. Simply stated, migrant geese do not turn into resident geese.



- and endangered species programs, all of its operations are funded through the sale of permits, and hunting and fishing licenses. This money is placed into a “dedicated” account known as the “Hunters’ and Anglers’ Fund” and can only be used for fish and wildlife management. Without the support of sportsmen and women, wildlife conservation programs as we know them would not exist.
- The white-tailed deer resource (through hunting) contributes more than \$100 million to the state’s economy offering jobs and income to a wide range of businesses, including sport shops, restaurants, hotels and service stations.
- The reintroduction of turkeys back in 1976 has benefited the Garden State with a current population of more than 18,000 birds in 20 counties, enabling the Division to establish a spring and fall hunting season for turkey.
- According to a recent federal survey, over 30 percent of the state's residents take part in some form of wildlife-associated recreation such as fishing, hunting, birdwatching or photographing wildlife. The availability of public land for these purposes significantly contributes to the quality of life for those who live and work in the Garden State.

For suggestions and comments on format and style please contact Natalie Baratta-Verdi at 609-777-4194

NJ Division of Fish & Wildlife
Information & Education Unit
P.O. Box 400
Trenton, NJ 08625-0400

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